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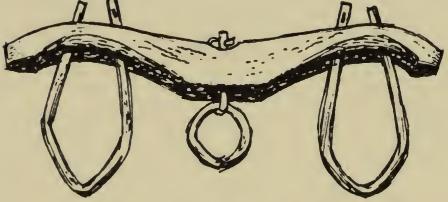
Cormican, P. J.
(Patrick J.)

A tribute to Abraham
Lincoln.

LINCOLN ROOM



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Lincoln Room

A Tribute to Abraham Lincoln

I.

Son of the forest primeval,
  Unspoiled by the arts of the time;
Destined by God for a leader,
  And fashioned for duty sublime;
Straight from the workshop of nature,
  And fresh from the virginal wild;
Child with the heart of a hero,
  And hero with heart of a child:
Accept this tribute of praise
From a lover of woodland ways.

II.

Admiring the grandeurs of nature,
  And growing to be what he saw;
Impartial as sunshine to all men,
  And true as a physical law;
As gentle as dewdrops on roses,
  Yet strong as a mountainous wave;
But not too strong to be human,
  Nor yet too weak to be brave.
In stature and character grand,
He was prince of a desolate land.

III.

When there's question of fashioning
heroes,
And work for a hero to do;
When it's time for removing abuses,
And building a nation anew;
When there's need of rebinding the
Union
By unbinding the bonds of the slave,
Give me a product of nature,
Intelligent, honest and brave.
Give me a man with a heart,
Untutored by diplomat art.

IV.

Better the song of the robin
Than the booming of guns from the
fort;
Better the breath of the meadows
Than the perfume of ladies at court;
Better the sigh of the pine tree
Than the laugh of the vain and
the gay;
Better are pioneer fences
Than lackeys in gaudy array,
When the Ship of State is aground,
And a pilot has to be found.

V.

Thou wert mocked by imperial writers,
  O martyr! to furnish a sneer;
Described as unkempt and ungainly,
  As shambling, uncultured and queer;
Deceived by the underhand methods
  Of foes who paraded as friends;
Who longed to dissever the Union
  For selfish, contemptible ends:
Such was thy help from abroad—
Diplomacy, statecraft and fraud.

VI.

Who but the bravest of heroes
  Could face such an army of foes?
Who, but a son of the martyrs,
  Could endure such unspeakable woes?
Who, but a large-hearted leader,
  Could forgive so much and forget?
Who, but a lover of freedom,
  Could incur such a burdensome debt?
O hero of heroes, indeed!
Be with us still in our need.

VII.

Throughout that deplorable conflict,
When the brightest of prospects were bad;
When even the hopeful were hopeless,
And even the bravest were sad;
When the canopied smoke of the battle
Converted the day into night,
Excluded the vision of Heaven,
And shifted the aspect of right;
When gloom and despair were abroad,
Lincoln relied upon God.

VIII.

He died for the doing of duty,
But his death was a glorious birth;
The birthday of manhood and freedom
For the slave-holding nations of earth.
He is dead, but he liveth forever
In the lives and the vision of men;
We have not encountered his equal,
Nor shall we encounter again.
He was human yet almost divine,
And his tomb is a national shrine.

P. J. Cormican, S. J.,
Georgetown University, D. C.
Feb. 12, 1923.

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